Improving Workplace Safety and Health in Manitoba

Education

Prevention

Enforcement

A Public Discussion Paper

September 2001

Manitoba
Labour and
Immigration

102-00405/

Message from the Minister

Last year 16 Manitobans were killed on the job. More than 18,000 others missed time at work because of injuries.

This situation is unacceptable, because we are not talking about statistics. We are talking about real people – husbands and wives, daughters and sons, mothers and fathers, friends and neighbours. A workplace accident hurts the victim, but it also hurts family members, co-workers and our community.

It's time to once again give top priority to keeping workers safe. The Workplace Safety and Health Act was enacted nearly 25 years ago and has not been subjected to a major review since 1983. The world has changed a lot in the past two decades. New technologies have introduced new hazards. Other jurisdictions have introduced new methods to keep workplaces safe and healthy.

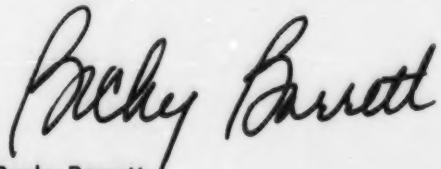
Earlier this year I announced a six-point strategy to strengthen education, prevention and enforcement efforts. The plan sets a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 per cent, marking the first time ever that the Manitoba government has set a quantifiable goal to drive its prevention strategy.

We want to hear your views on the plan, and how we can achieve these goals. This discussion paper is intended to spark discussion by outlining some ideas that could be considered. Your views and ideas will be carefully reviewed by a committee made up of business, labour and technical representatives. They will help guide the government as we improve programs and legislation dealing with occupational safety and health.

We have begun to move ahead with the plan by hiring more safety and health officers, and by appointing a special prosecutor to focus on these issues. However, in addition to doing more, we also need to do the job more effectively.

We will listen carefully to the wisdom of workers, employers, technical experts and all Manitobans. Your ideas and experience can help us reduce the human suffering that arises from workplace injury, disease and death.

Thank you for your help with this vital task.



Becky Barrett
Minister of Labour and Immigration

Manitoba's six-point strategy:

- Setting a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 per cent over four years
- Targeting young worker injury
- Strengthening occupational disease prevention
- Improving enforcement of current workplace legislation and codes
- Improving agricultural safety and health
- Undertaking a legislative review of the *Workplace Safety and Health Act*

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Executive Summary

The Manitoba government is seeking the public's views on current safety and health legislation and the government's strategy to reduce the number of workplace injuries. Public consultations will be conducted by a four-member review committee chaired by Wally Fox-Decent. The committee will accept written submissions and hold a series of public meetings before submitting a report to Labour and Immigration Minister Becky Barrett.

The focus of the public consultations is a broad **Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy**

The focus of the public consultations is a broad **Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy** announced by the minister on August 3, 2001. The strategy has six main elements:

- **Setting a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 per cent over four years.** A major joint effort between Manitoba Labour and Immigration and the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) will be required to meet this goal. Reaching the reduction target would mean 3,000 fewer Manitoba workers subjected to the pain and suffering of a time-loss injury.

- **Targeting young worker injury.** Young workers entering the work force for the first time suffer an excessive number of workplace injuries. Ideas for improvement include ensuring the adequacy of safety instruction in apprenticeship and industrial training programs, and delivering health and safety instruction in high schools.

- **Strengthening occupational disease prevention.** Enforcement of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and the Workplace Health Hazard Regulations (WHHR) is being improved to address the problem of chemical, mould and other contaminants in many workplaces. The health hazard regulations will also be reviewed to assess their adequacy in today's workplaces.

- **Improving enforcement of current workplace legislation and codes.** The Workplace Safety and Health Division enforces the law through workplace inspections and investigations, with particular attention to high-risk workplaces. The recent increase in division staff is one step to improve enforcement, but we also need to look at how to do the job more effectively.

- **Improving agricultural safety and health.** Almost half of Manitoba's traumatic workplace fatalities are in the agricultural sector. Manitoba Labour and Immigration and Manitoba Agriculture and Food will work with stakeholders in the agriculture sector to improve education and strengthen safety measures in this vital Manitoba industry.

- **Undertaking a legislative review of the Workplace Safety and Health Act.** This legislation was enacted in 1977 and has not been subjected to a major review since 1983. Since then, the workplace has changed, and we have learned more about how to prevent workplace injuries and disease. We need to see what has worked elsewhere – and to develop good, practical "made-in-Manitoba" solutions. The act will be reviewed with public input with a view toward modernization and the prevention of illness and injury.

The review committee is seeking public feedback on this strategy, including these specific areas of interest:

Programming options

- *Is a 15 per cent reduction over four years the right target? How can we achieve this target?*
- *How can we improve the delivery of safety and health education and on-the-job supervision to protect young workers from hazards?*
- *What areas of occupational disease and illness prevention are of greatest concern? Where should enforcement efforts be directed? In addition to hiring more inspectors, what other steps can be taken?*
- *How can enforcement be further improved?*
- *What programming options can improve health and safety on Manitoba's farms?*

The legislative and regulatory framework

- *Do the existing compliance tools work properly? Can they be improved? Should the legislation be amended to include a wider range of compliance tools?*
- *Do penalties for violations need to be changed?*

- *Is there a need to expand the duties and powers of safety and health committees?*
- *Should emerging issues such as workplace violence and ergonomics be addressed through workplace safety and health regulations?*

The review committee is seeking input from a broad range of Manitobans.

A safe and healthy workplace is everyone's right and everyone's responsibility. Therefore, the review committee is seeking input from a broad range of Manitobans.

The deadline for submissions is November 30, 2001. For more information, see pages 9 and 10 of this discussion paper.

Introduction

A safe and healthy workplace: Every worker's right, everyone's responsibility

Workplace safety and health legislation and injury prevention programs must support each worker's right to a safe and healthy workplace. To be effective, this framework must recognize that everyone in the workplace is responsible and has a role to play in preventing workplace injuries and disease. Whether the chief executive officer or a newly hired worker, everyone has a personal and shared responsibility to work co-operatively to prevent workplace injuries and disease.

Whether the chief executive officer or a newly hired worker, everyone has a personal and shared responsibility to work co-operatively to prevent workplace injuries and disease.

Since employers have the greatest degree of control over the workplace, they have the greatest degree of responsibility for workplace safety and health. But that does not relieve supervisors and workers from their own responsibility to co-operate in controlling workplace hazards. They also must take the necessary precautions to protect themselves and others.

In order for workers to adequately fulfill their responsibilities, they must be informed and empowered to participate in safety and health management in their workplaces. In Canada, our safety and health legislation grants three important rights to workers:

- **The right to know** about all workplace hazards workers are exposed to in their jobs, and to know the rights afforded to them by law
- **The right to participate** in decisions related to workplace safety and health, free from reprisals for their participation (workplace safety and health committees are a critically important way for workers to exercise this right)
- **The right to refuse** unusually dangerous work

To give effect to those three fundamental rights, most Canadian legislation also prohibits employers from disciplining or imposing other sanctions on workers for fulfilling their responsibilities or exercising their rights. This enables workers to participate with employers and supervisors in the prevention of workplace injuries and disease.

Taken together, this legal and preventative framework is often called the **internal responsibility system** for workplace safety and health.

Workplace safety and health committee members play a vital role in the system by acting as day-to-day internal safety and health monitors.

However, we cannot rely solely on the internal responsibility system. Effective monitoring and enforcement by government are key to making this system work. So, too, are education, training and prevention promotion programs that give people the motivation and skills needed to prevent injury and disease.

Most employers are responsible and make genuine efforts to maintain a safe and healthy workplace. But a few remain who are prepared to cut corners in order to gain a competitive advantage. Effective enforcement is needed to ensure those workplaces remain safe – and to protect responsible employers from unfair competition.

The most effective safety and healthy system combines a genuine commitment to safety by employers, day-to-day monitoring by active safety and health committees, and support, education and enforcement by government. The goal of preventing injury and disease can only be achieved if everyone works together.

Best practices in other jurisdictions

Since the last review of Manitoba's occupational health and safety system, governments have learned more about how to prevent workplace injuries and disease:

- Motivating workplaces to develop a positive **safety culture** is critical.
- A positive safety culture can only develop in the context of an effective **internal responsibility system**.
- Education, training, consultation and promotion are necessary to assist all employers in understanding their responsibilities. However, some employers still need the full weight of **enforcement** to take health and safety seriously.
- Governments should play an active role in supporting effective **internal responsibility** within workplaces by setting and enforcing legislative standards, providing consultation services and delivering or co-ordinating education, training and prevention promotion programs.

- **Co-operative partnership arrangements** with other organizations extend the reach of prevention efforts of government agencies.
- More attention needs to be focused on **educating high-risk groups**, such as young people and new workers.
- Programs promoting a **positive culture** in workplaces can be strengthened by education and promotional programs designed to **change general attitudes and behaviours toward safety and risk management**.

This public consultation will focus on: education and training, promotion of injury prevention, and enforcement.

Why this review is needed

The Manitoba ***Workplace Safety and Health Act W210*** was enacted in 1977. Manitoba has not undertaken a major review of its legislation since 1983.

The workplace has changed in the past two decades. There have been important technological advances and changes in industrial processes. Some workplace hazards have become less common while new hazards have been introduced.

The organization of our workplaces has also changed. Increasingly, safety and health legislation and programs must consider hazards introduced into the workplace by contractors, owners and suppliers, as well as those hazards that remain under the control of employers, supervisors and workers.

At the same time, our knowledge of workplace safety and health has increased. Today we can control workplace hazards and risks with sophisticated methods that were unavailable two decades ago. Many workplaces are taking a more systematic approach to managing safety and health through formal workplace programs.

The Manitoba government recently introduced a six-point strategy to reduce the number of workplace injuries and address these changing needs. The goal is to reduce the overall number of workplace injuries by 15 per cent while targeting issues such as young worker injury, occupational disease and illness prevention, enforcement, and agricultural safety and health. An important component of the strategy is a legislative review of *the Workplace Safety and Health Act*.

We can succeed only if everyone works together. Therefore, the Manitoba government is now seeking public input on how best to

implement this strategy. You are invited to share your views on the effectiveness of the current laws, as well as the most effective means of reducing injuries and disease in today's changing workplace.

The public consultation process

This public consultation will focus on ways to make Manitoba workplaces safer through more effective use of:

- education and training,
- promotion of injury prevention, and
- enforcement.

Input and advice are being sought from individuals and organizations with an interest in health and safety, including workers, employers, unions and employer associations. Feedback is needed from Manitobans of all ages, genders and occupations, including recently injured workers, their families and the families of deceased workers.

The public consultation will be conducted by a four-member review committee made up of business, labour and technical representatives of the Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health. The committee is chaired by Wally Fox-Decent, who has been the chairperson of the Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health since 1977, and is also chairperson of the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba. Following public meetings, the review committee will draft a report to the minister of Labour and Immigration. This report will be made public, and will be an important source of advice as the government moves forward with the strategy.

Public meetings will be scheduled in the following locations:

- Brandon
- Flin Flon
- Gimli
- Lac du Bonnet
- Steinbach
- Swan River
- Thompson
- Winkler
- Winnipeg

The review committee may schedule additional meetings with interested stakeholder groups to discuss specific topics of interest.

Meeting dates and venues will be provided through advertisements and the news media. You can also contact the review committee on the Web at **www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety** or by telephoning (204) 945-0767 for further information about the hearings. You can also call the Manitoba government's toll-free line – 1-800-282-8069 – and ask for the Workplace Safety and Health Division.

The committee is accepting written submissions filed before the deadline as well as any submissions presented during the public meetings. ***All submissions must be received by November 30, 2001.***

Submissions should be sent to:

Workplace Safety and Health Review Committee
c/o Workplace Safety and Health Division
Rm. 200-401 York Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P8

Fax:	(204) 945-4556
Email:	hsconsultation@gov.mb.ca
Web:	www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety
Phone:	(204) 945-0767

Manitoba Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy – An Overview

On August 3, 2001, Labour and Immigration Minister Becky Barrett announced a broad Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy.

The focus of the province's six-point strategy is to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.

The focus of this strategy is to enhance practices and provisions that will prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. Manitoba's rate of time-loss injuries for workers with Workers Compensation coverage is the highest rate in Canada. This situation is unacceptable and must be addressed.

Manitoba's six-point strategy

The strategy has six main elements, including five relating to programs and one addressing the legislative framework:

- **Setting a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 per cent over four years**
- **Targeting young worker injury**
- **Strengthening occupational disease prevention**
- **Improving enforcement of current workplace legislation and codes**
- **Improving agricultural safety and health**
- **Undertaking a legislative review of the *Workplace Safety and Health Act***

The five program elements are discussed in greater detail in Part 1 of this discussion paper. Part 2 deals with the review of safety and health legislation.

To be most effective, the strategy requires the support and co-operation of individual workers, managers and employers. The review committee invites you to participate by telling us what improvements are needed to help make Manitoba workplaces the safest in Canada.

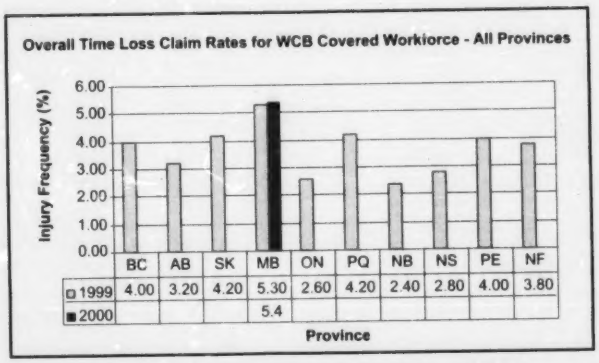
Part 1: Program Elements of the Strategy

Setting a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 per cent over four years

Injuries at work impose an enormous cost on injured workers and their families, as well as employers, the health care system and the province as a whole. The cost of workplace injuries to the provincial economy is estimated to be more than $300 million annually.

In 1998, the time-loss injury rate as measured by the Workers Compensation Board peaked at 5.7 time-loss injuries per 100 workers. The 15 per cent reduction target is only a first step towards making Manitoba workplaces among the safest in Canada.

Reaching that target would mean that 3,000 fewer Manitoba workers would be subjected to the pain and suffering of a time-loss injury. It would also reduce Workers Compensation Board time-loss injury claims costs by about $25 million. The corresponding savings to the provincial economy would exceed $50 million.



Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba (WCB) statistics suggest time-loss injuries and total claims (time-loss and no time-loss) continue to occur at an unacceptably high level in our workplaces.

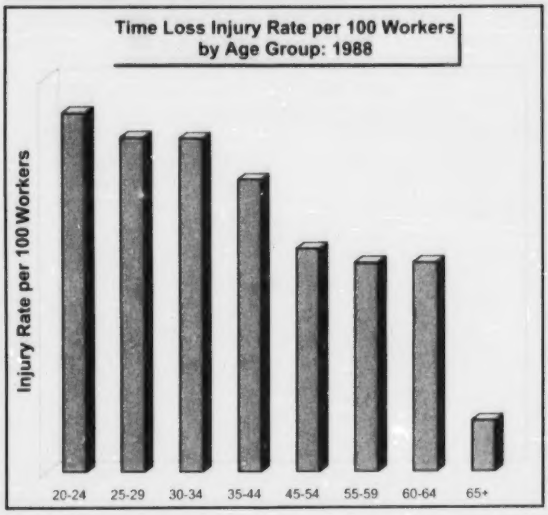
Achieving this goal over four years will require a major joint effort between Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Division and the Workers Compensation Board. More importantly, it will require the commitment and effort of every employer, occupational health and safety committee, safety association and worker in Manitoba.

Share your views:

Is a 15 per cent reduction over four years the right target?

How can we achieve this target?

Improving youth injury prevention



Time-loss injury rates are higher for youth than for other age groups. A disproportionate number of youth are injured and killed in the workplace.

When they arrive in the workplace, young people need additional training and supervision – both to recognize hazards and to understand how to protect themselves from these hazards.

Too many young workers are inadequately prepared for the safety and health challenges they will face at work. They have little understanding of workplace hazards and how they should be controlled, or of their legal rights and responsibilities concerning safety and health.

Share your views

How can we ensure that young workers receive the additional training and supervision they need on the job to protect them from hazards?

How can we improve the delivery of safety and health education in Manitoba schools?

How could we do a better job of promoting occupational health and safety education in apprenticeship programs and industrial training?

Do you have any other ideas that would reduce the number of young people being injured or killed on the job?

School is a good place to begin educating young people about job safety. One priority is to look at the education system to assess whether our youth are being properly prepared to enter the workforce, and if they are not, what needs to be done to rectify this situation. We need to identify where and how safety and health is now being taught and how this training can be improved. We also need to recognize that other competing demands may make it difficult to expand this part of the curriculum.

Some successful youth programs now exist in Manitoba. Through Workers of Tomorrow, volunteer speakers make in-school presentations on how to recognize workplace hazards and prevent accidents. Minerva Manitoba is an initiative in post-secondary institutions to promote the inclusion of safety and health material in the curricula.

The Workplace Safety and Health Division has also recently established the Youth Injury Prevention Committee of Manitoba. This committee is made up of representatives from business, labour, government, safety organizations and other interest groups associated with youth occupational safety and health issues. Apprenticeship and other industrial training programs will be reviewed across the province to ensure health and safety instruction is adequate. The delivery of expanded health and safety instruction in the high school curriculum will also be explored.

Young people are the employers, supervisors and workers of tomorrow. By reaching them before they enter the workplace, we will be investing in better prevention in the future.

Enhancing occupational disease prevention

Occupational disease prevention needs greater attention in today's workplace. Workers are continually exposed to chemical, biological and physical hazards. Exposure to multiple hazards, such as noise and chemicals, can create added risks. We know little about the health effects of long-term exposure to some of these hazards.

The Workplace Health Hazard Regulation (WHHR) and the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) require employers to implement prevention plans. These plans must consider risk factors for occupational disease, workplace monitoring, implementation of appropriate controls and worker education.

It should be noted that WCB occupational illness claims are an imperfect indicator of occupational health issues. Adverse health effects are under-reported, and the cause often may not be recognized, except in episodes of acute exposure.

Workplace safety and health officers deal with health hazards through routine inspections. The department also targets industries with a greater risk of such exposures. With the addition of more staff, the division will enhance enforcement activities in this area.

The Workplace Health Hazard Regulations will be reviewed to assess their adequacy in today's workplaces.

Share your views

What areas of occupational illness and disease prevention are of greatest concern?

Where should enforcement efforts be directed?

The government is hiring more inspectors, in part to improve compliance with regulations designed to prevent occupational diseases. What other steps can be taken?

Better safety and health enforcement

Preventing workplace injuries and disease requires an ongoing commitment from employers, supervisors and workers to continually improve safety and health practices.

It also requires the active support of government. While many employers will respond to educational and promotional programs advising them of their responsibilities, enforcement measures are still necessary.

Over the past two years, the number of safety and health officers has been increased and a prosecutor has been designated to specialize in safety and health prosecutions. As a result, enforcement activity has increased. However, in addition to doing more, we must do the job more effectively.

The Workplace Safety and Health Division enforces the law primarily through workplace inspections and investigations. High-risk industries, workplaces and activities are targeted as priorities for safety and health inspections. Last year the Workplace Safety and Health Division conducted 2,760 inspections.

- When infractions are identified, employers are issued improvement orders indicating any areas requiring improvement. The order specifies the date by which the problem must be rectified. A re-inspection is then conducted to ensure compliance. Last year the division issued 3,510 improvement orders.

Share your views

How can enforcement be further improved?

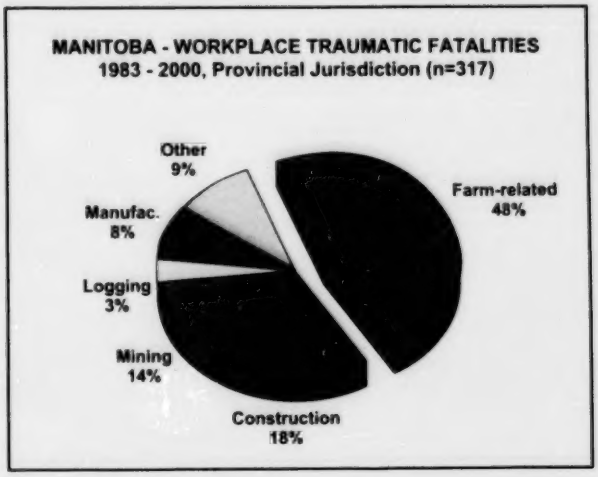
- If workers are in imminent danger of serious injury, officers issue a stop work order. Work is only able to resume once the director of the Workplace Safety and Health Division is satisfied that the danger has been properly addressed. Last year 94 stop work orders were issued.

- For serious infractions, the division recommends prosecution. Manitoba Justice then reviews the file and decides whether or not a prosecution will be initiated. If a prosecution is successful, the court determines the level of fine to be imposed. Last year 15 prosecutions were completed.

Just as workplace parties must commit themselves to continual improvement of their safety and health practices, the Workplace Safety and Health Division must commit itself to continual review and improvement of enforcement and prevention initiatives.

Improving safety and health in the agriculture sector

Agriculture is a high-risk industry. Almost half of all traumatic workplace fatalities are in the agricultural sector. For every person killed in an agricultural workplace, 25 more are hospitalized and over 500 seek medical aid. An average of 800 hospitalized days per year were due to farm-related occupational injuries.



Like other workplaces, farms are covered under *the Workplace Safety and Health Act.*

Family farms have unique characteristics. Most workers are owner/operators or family members. In many cases, part of the workplace (the farmyard) is also the place of residence and recreation. As a result, children and other people who are not working are exposed to occupational hazards.

For family farms, the primary health and safety activity has been education. The Manitoba departments of Labour and Immigration, Agriculture and Food and Education and Youth are working with agriculture stakeholders to improve farm safety education and promotion.

The government's inspection and enforcement activities focus on larger corporate farms with employees.

Improvement options for this important industry are also discussed regularly by the Agricultural Committee of the Minister's Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health.

Manitoba must look at how health and safety can be improved in agricultural settings. Our efforts must include the protection of all family members who participate in farm-related work.

Share your views

What programming options can improve health and safety on Manitoba's farms?

Part 2: Reviewing *the Workplace Safety and Health Act*

The purpose of Health and Safety legislation is to provide an effective framework for preventing work-related injury and disease. The legislation must be modernized to meet the needs of today's workplaces and to improve the prevention of workplace injuries and disease.

Manitoba's *Workplace Safety and Health Act* was enacted in 1977 and has not been subjected to a major review since 1983. The act is accompanied by 12 regulations.

The review committee is seeking input on the adequacy of the legislation and changes that could be considered to provide a more effective legal framework for preventing injuries and disease.

Some areas the legislative review will consider include:

- tools for compliance,
- safety and health committee powers, and
- emerging safety and health issues.

Share your views

Are there shortcomings in the present legislation, regulations and codes?

What changes could be considered to improve compliance with safety and health requirements?

Tools for compliance

In Manitoba, safety and health officers have the following tools to secure compliance with legal safety and health requirements:

- orders for improvement,
- stop work orders, and
- prosecution.

Improvement orders

Improvement orders are an important compliance tool in Manitoba. Improvements must be completed by the date specified on the order. Safety and health officers re-inspect a workplace to confirm compliance with the improvement order. Virtually all improvement orders are issued to employers. However, orders may also be issued to workers – for example, when they are in the role of a supervisor.

Stop work orders

If workers are in imminent danger of serious injury, safety and health officers issue a stop work order. Work is only able to resume once the director of the Workplace Safety and Health Division is satisfied the necessary precautions have been taken to remove the danger.

Prosecution and fines

Upon successful prosecution, the courts levy fines. They are intended to serve as a specific deterrent to non-compliance for the individual charged, as well as a general deterrent to others who might otherwise choose not to comply with the law.

The maximum fine level in Manitoba is $150,000. Eight jurisdictions have higher maximum fines.

The imposition of low fines can reduce their effectiveness as deterrents. If they are set too low, they may come to be considered as an informal "licence fee" for breaching the law.

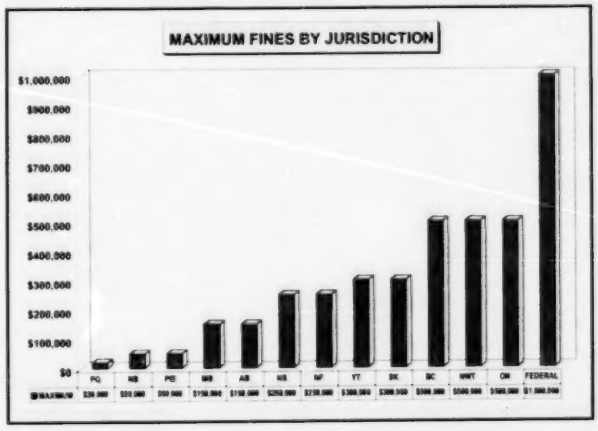
Manitoba's courts have been levying fines that are a fraction of the maximum. The largest fine levied to date is $90,000. Over the last five years, the average fine levied was less than $10,000.

Share your views

Do the existing compliance tools work properly? Could they be improved?

Should the legislation be amended to include a wider range of compliance tools, such as compliance assurance, administrative penalties or alternative sentencing?

Do penalties for violations need to be changed?



Other jurisdictions have additional tools to secure compliance such as:

Compliance assurance

This instrument is used by the federal government and Saskatchewan in situations where improved compliance is needed or for infractions considered to be less serious. It is a formal document that identifies the issue that needs to be addressed and records the employer's agreement to remedy the situation within a specified time. Confirmation of the correction is then forwarded to the safety and health officer.

Administrative penalties or summary offence tickets

This tool could fill the void between the issuance of an improvement order and prosecution. It would allow for immediate imposition of a sanction for certain types of non-compliance, such as refusal to comply with an improvement order. It has been used successfully in British Columbia and the Yukon and to some extent in Ontario. Manitoba does not now have a system of administrative penalties or summary offence tickets.

Alternative or creative sentencing

Alternative or creative sentencing allows a judge the option of requiring an employer to pay for a range of prevention activities instead of levying a fine. Manitoba judges are currently very limited in their ability to alter the penalty.

Creative sentencing enables courts to consider the nature of the offence and the circumstances surrounding its commission. In addition to fines or other penalties, they would be able to order the employer to perform community service, or fund research or public education.

Creative sentencing provisions exist in British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories.

Safety and health committee powers

Safety and health committees play a vital role in workplace injury prevention by giving workers and managers the opportunity to work together to resolve issues. They also act as internal monitors for safety and health in the workplace and are an important link to government safety and health officers. Safety and health legislation must adequately reflect the critical role committees should play in the workplace.

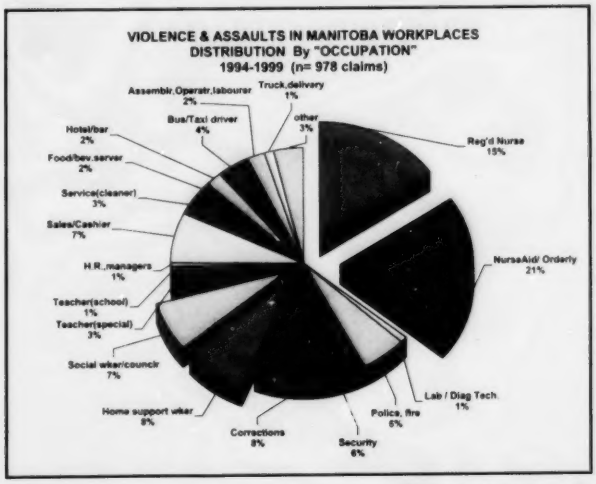
Share your views

Is there a need to expand the duties and powers of safety and health committees in Manitoba?

Committees currently have limited powers, such as receiving the concerns or complaints of workers. They also identify hazards and develop measures to protect the safety and health of workers. Legislation in other jurisdictions gives committees other powers, such as accident investigation and participation in right-to-refuse situations.

Emerging safety and health issues

Safety and health legislation must have adequate regulation-making authority to effectively address the wide variety of hazards in the workplace. Since 1977, a number of new safety and health issues have emerged. Two such issues are workplace violence and ergonomics.



Workplace violence

Physical violence and psychological violence, such as harassment, are problems that continue to be a concern in the workplace.

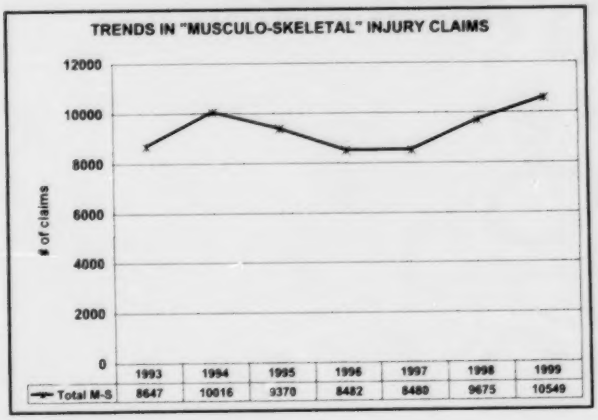
Approximately 200 time-loss injuries are the result of workplace violence. Half of those occur in health care.

Violence is an issue that crosses the boundary from safety and health into criminal law. It may reflect the need to improve the general safety and health environment and culture in a given workplace.

Regulations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan address the issue of workplace violence.

Ergonomics

Half of all time-loss injuries sustained by workers are musculo-skeletal injuries, caused by lifting and other repetitive tasks. The prevalence of these injuries suggests further attention should be given to the interactions between workers and their tasks.



Prevention of these injuries requires an effective ergonomic program that includes identification of problem jobs, development of solutions, training and education of workers and medical management. Management commitment and worker involvement are also essential.

Ergonomics fits the job to the worker through evaluation and design of the work environment in relation to human characteristics and interactions in the workplace.

Two jurisdictions, British Columbia and Saskatchewan, formally regulate ergonomics.

Share your views

Should emerging issues such as workplace violence and ergonomics be addressed through workplace safety and health regulations?

How to Reach Us

The Workplace Safety and Health Review Committee looks forward to hearing Manitobans' views on the Workplace Safety and Health Injury Prevention Strategy and the adequacy of the existing legislative framework.

Safety at work is an issue that touches us all. Everyone's view is important.

For more information, please contact the committee:

Workplace Safety and Health Review Committee
c/o Workplace Safety and Health Division
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You can also call the Manitoba government's toll-free line (1-800-282-8069) and ask for the Workplace Safety and Health Division.